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RESOLUTION PROHIBITING THE SALE OF F-5E/F AIRCRAFT TO HONDURAS

JUNE 5, 1987.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. PELL, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, submitted the following

REPORT

together with

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

[To accompany S.J. Res. 128]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, to which was referred the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 128) prohibiting the sale to Honduras of certain defense articles and related defense services, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the joint resolution do pass.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this resolution is to prohibit the sale to Honduras of F-5E/F aircraft and related items.

BACKGROUND

On May 12, 1987, the administration formally notified the Congress, in compliance with Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of its intent to sell to Honduras 12 F-5E/F aircraft with spares, munitions, support equipment, and training. The estimated cost of $75 million would be financed with grant military assistance available in fiscal year 1987 and subsequent years. On May 13, Senator Dodd, with Senator Pell as a cosponsor, introduced S.J. Res. 128, which would prohibit the sale.

The administration is responding to the Honduran Government's request for United States help in upgrading the Honduran air force

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through the transfer of 10 F–5E (single-seat) and 2 F–5F (dual-seat) aircraft as replacements for 13 French Super Mystere aircraft bought from Israel in 1976. Prior to and since then, the United States has followed a policy of restraint with regard to making high performance aircraft available in the region. For example, in 1978 the Carter administration rejected a similar Guatemalan request for F–5 aircraft. To date, with the exception of the marginally supersonic Super Mysteres, no supersonic aircraft have been sold by any supplier to a Central American country. Accordingly the Honduran Super Mystere squadron already constitutes the most sophisticated fighter/attack force in the region.

A comparison of the Super Mystere and the F–5E/F demonstrates that the latter aircraft is substantially more capable and sophisticated. The F–5E/F is capable of speeds more than 50 percent higher, has a faster climb rate, and is highly maneuverable. It has double the combat radius either with internal fuel alone or with external tanks, and it can carry several times as much ordnance. The F–5 also carries a high-performance antiaircraft missile, the Sidewinder. Although the Super Mystere is the most capable aircraft in the region, it represents a technology several generations old. By comparison, the F–5E/F represents relatively new technology. It has built an enviable record and is currently in use as an aggressor training aircraft to challenge U.S. military pilots using top-of-the-line equipment.

COMMITTEE ACTION

In a March 25 hearing on the administration's fiscal year 1988 foreign assistance request, and again during the committee's markup of foreign aid legislation on April 23, the question of selling F–5E/F's to Honduras was discussed in depth. Administration officials, including Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams and the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Southern Command, Gen. John Galvin, set forth the administration's position on the proposed sale and responded to questions.

On April 23, during markup of the draft foreign assistance bill put forward by Chairman Pell, Senator Helms moved to delete a provision prohibiting during fiscal year 1988 the use of military assistance funds for supersonic tactical fighter aircraft to any Central American country. That motion was defeated, 10–9.

On May 21 and June 2, the committee held hearings on S.J. Res. 128, receiving testimony from retired Col. Edward King, member of the Commission on Central American Negotiations; Victor Johnson, Senior Associate, the Inter-American Dialogue; William Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central America; Robert Pastorino, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American Affairs; and General Philip Gast, Director of the Defense Security Assistance Agency.

On June 2, the committee ordered S.J. Res. 128 reported favorably by a vote of 10–9. Voting in favor were Senators Pell, Biden, Sarbanes, Cranston, Dodd, Kerry, Simon, Sanford, Adams, and Moynihan. Voting against were Senators Helms, Lugar, Kassebaum, Boschwitz, Pressler, Murkowski, Trible, Evans, and McConnell.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The committee carefully weighed this proposed sale of F-5E/F aircraft to Honduras before deciding that, on balance, the risks posed by such an arms transfer are significant and outweigh any purported benefits. Specifically, the committee acted on the basis of the following considerations:

Possible acquisition of MIG-21's by Nicaragua

A major committee concern is that the introduction into the region of F-5E/F's could help to induce, and provide a rationale for, the acquisition by Nicaragua of MIG-21's from the Soviet Union or Cuba. The administration's assertion that the F-5E/F sale would not cause the Nicaraguans to acquire MIG's appears to the committee less as a solid judgment based on evidence than as an unpersuasive attempt to minimize a very clear risk. Since the administration has emphasized that it would view a Nicaraguan acquisition of MIG's as unacceptable, the committee is puzzled that the administration should have no reservations about pursuing a course which could lead to that very result.

The question occurs whether administration policy is indeed designed to produce armed confrontation. In any case, the committee believes that Congress should feel compelled to stop this sale in order to avoid a potentially disastrous train of events that could culminate in war.

A more general arms race in Central America

A regional arms race could also be triggered if El Salvador, Honduras' traditional adversary, felt impelled to acquire supersonic aircraft to maintain balance. These two nations, which fought the "soccer war" in 1969, have a history of border problems. And strain between the two countries was manifested just 2 years ago when Honduran concerns about the training of Salvadoran troops on Honduran territory contributed to the termination of a United States-sponsored joint military training program.

Another potential player in a regional arms race is Guatemala, which would also be likely to seek to acquire supersonic aircraft if its neighbors had done so.

Such prospects cannot be dismissed lightly. The current absence of supersonic aircraft in Central America, far from reflecting a paucity of such aircraft on the world market, instead represents the result of more than two decades of restraint by both Democratic and Republican administrations. The committee is little persuaded by the current administration's arguments that an arms race is unlikely because El Salvador and Guatemala do not currently intend to request supersonic aircraft; present public stances could change sharply once Honduras had shifted the regional balance.

Availability of alternative aircraft to meet actual threat

The committee believes that, while Honduras may reasonably desire to modernize its air force by replacing the aging Super Mysteres, it does not—for purposes of meeting the current potential threat posed by its neighbors—need aircraft with the sophistication or the particular capabilities of the F-5E/F. The F-5E/F is primar-

ily an air-to-air fighter, and is thus not the most effective air weapon available to meet the kinds of threats to which Honduras is likely to be exposed.

Specifically, Nicaragua's air capability is mainly a counterinsurgency force consisting of helicopter gunships and troop-carrying helicopters; reportedly, Nicaragua has no fighter/interceptor capability. A far greater threat—against which the F-5E/F would have limited value—emanates from Nicaraguan ground forces, which are substantially larger and more capable than those of Honduras.

The following chart displays the differing military priorities and force structures of Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Honduras is the only nation of the four with jet fighters, and also has the largest force of bombers. Nicaragua has the strongest ground force of the four, and its air power is concentrated in helicopters. El Salvador has chosen a middle ground with a balance between air and ground forces, while Guatemala is fourth in both air and ground forces.

COMPARATIVE MILITARY STRENGTHS

[Source: Department of Defense]

	Nicaragua	Honduras	El Salvador	Guatemala
Fighter/trainer aircraft	0	12	0	0
Ground attack aircraft	3	15	13	11
Helicopters	57	37	77	33
Active troops	72,000	14,600	43,000	30,000
Tanks	150	0	0	15
Armored vehicles	200	100	88	50

The threat assessment that derives from these fighters leads to the conclusion that United States participation in any Honduran aircraft acquisitions should be aimed at defending Honduras against ground attack. An appropriately selected aircraft could be used against attacking ground forces, including tanks, and would also be effective against helicopters and airplanes across the wide spectrum of threat. In this regard, the committee notes that the executive branch first proposed that Honduras consider the F-5A and F-5B—planes with balanced fighter and attack capabilities—but that the Honduran Government preferred the more prestigious and sophisticated F-5E's and F-5F's. The committee's own judgment is that such aircraft as the subsonic A-4 Skyhawk or the A-7 Corsair would be appropriate choices to meet likely threats.

In the committee's view, it makes sense to assist Honduras in meeting an existing and real threat rather than an air threat that is currently insignificant and that might indeed be increased by the very act of providing Honduras the F-5E/F. The committee's emphasis on existing threats does mean, however, that the committee stands prepared to reopen the issue promptly should one of Honduras' neighbors acquire a supersonic fighter capability.

Effect of the peace process

On the political level, the committee is concerned that the sale could have an adverse effect, in both the short and long term, on the Central American peace process. The Presidents of the five

Central American countries are now preparing to meet in Guatemala later this month to attempt a peaceful resolution based on the proposal drafted by President Arias of Costa Rica. Given that both the Arias plan and the Contadora Statement of Objectives call for the limitation and reduction of arms in the region, the committee believes that the proposed F-5E/F sale could only introduce a negative element into the already complex task of negotiating a stable peace in Central America.

Recalling that, by a 97-1 vote, the Senate approved the Sanford resolution which strongly endorsed the Arias initiative, the committee believes that rejection of the proposed sale of F-5E/F's to Honduras would be consistent with that earlier measure.

Better uses of scarce resources

Finally, the committee notes that, by virtually all social and economic indicators, Honduras is one of the least developed countries in all Latin America. According to AID figures, per capita income in 1986 was $800. Life expectancy is estimated at 62 years and the infant mortality rate is estimated at 70 per 1,000 births. An estimated 60 percent of the population is malnourished; infectious diseases are the leading cause of morbidity and mortality; many primary school-age children do not complete the sixth grade, and the majority of students do not complete school. Only about 14 percent of Hondurans have access to piped water or sanitation services; and AID has concluded that the low annual Honduran growth rate of 3 percent makes it extremely difficult for the country to make gains in per capita income or to improve its low socioeconomic standing in the region.

Given these stark facts, the committee can only conclude that scarce aid resources for Honduras would be far better used to address the extreme poverty of the Honduran people, rather than expended on weaponry far more sophisticated than that needed to protect Honduran security. The committee urges the implementation of a Honduran aid policy that focuses a greater proportion of resources on health and education and on those sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, which can bring desperately needed improvement to the lot of the Honduran people.

In juxtaposition to such abject poverty as exists in Honduras, the committee believes that a force of the most sophisticated, expensive, and highly technical aircraft in the region would be not only incongruous but a reflection of a seriously distorted United States policy.

COST ESTIMATE

In accordance with Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee estimates that the passage of S.J. Res. 168 will create no additional costs in this or the next 5 fiscal years. The time constraints concerning this joint resolution made it impracticable to obtain a cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office.

REGULATORY IMPACT

In accordance with Rule XXVI, paragraph 11(b) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee had concluded that there is no regulatory impact from S.J. Res. 128.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee notes that no changes in existing laws are made by this joint resolution.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATOR HELMS

On June 2, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 10-9 to disapprove the sale of 10 F-5E and 2 F-5F aircraft to Honduras. Those voting to disapprove the sale were: Senators Pell, Biden (by proxy), Sarbanes (by proxy), Cranston, Dodd, Kerry, Simon (by proxy), Sanford, Adams, and Moynihan (by proxy). Those voting not to disapprove the sale were: Senators Helms, Lugar, Kassebaum (by proxy), Boschwitz (by proxy), Pressler, Murkowski (by proxy), Trible (by proxy), Evans, and McConnell (by proxy).

The Honduran Government has requested that the United States sell them a $75 million package of aircraft which includes 12 F-5 planes. The justification for selling these planes to Honduras is simple: The Super Mysteres currently used by the Honduran air force are now obsolete. Spare parts, including engines, are no longer available anywhere, and such planes are not flying anywhere else in the world. The F-5 planes will merely be a one-for-one replacement for the obsolete Super Mysteres, and will not introduce a new strategic element into the region.

Honduras has the smallest army in Central America and, historically, has had to rely on air superiority to maintain its defense capabilities. Those who oppose this sale have said that Honduras could purchase a less sophisticated aircraft. In fact, the aircraft mentioned by these opponents are either not suited to Honduras' defense needs, or are no longer even in production.

For many years, Honduras has been one of our strongest allies in the Western Hemisphere. It is vital that this sale of F-5 aircraft to Honduras proceed as soon as possible. It is essential to protect the balance of power in Central America, and to meet defense responsibilities with our democratic neighbors.

The administration has prepared an excellent outline of the need for this sale which is included as an annex to these views.

ANNEX

SUMMARY

The U.S. Government proposes to sell 12 F-5 fighter aircraft to the democratic government of Honduras as a replacement for the Honduran Air Force's obsolescent Super Mystere fighters. The proposed package of planes, materiel, services, and training would require $75 million in military assistance (MAP) funding over a 4-year period. The Hondurans would retire their existing supersonic fighters as the F-5 systems reach full operational capability.

The sale is necessary because Honduran air superiority, which has been a key element in the regional military balance in Central America, is endangered by the deteriorating condition of the Super Mysteres. No other military in the world flies the Super Mystere and spare parts are no longer manufactured. If the militaries of the Central American democracies are allowed to deteriorate, the Nicaraguan Government will have little incentive to participate in regional negotiations.

Continued Honduran air superiority is essential in deterring Sandinista aggression. The Honduran strategy of deterrence does not attempt to match or directly counter military capabilities of potential opponents; rather, it maintains the existing qualitative edge of the Honduran Air Force.

After lengthy deliberations, the Hondurans rejected alternative aircraft—including the Israeli KFIR—and chose the F-5E/F as best suited to their defense requirements. The U.S. Air Force has determined that sufficient F-5's will be available for Honduras' requirements as worldwide demand for F-5 training decreases. Leadtimes for delivery and training make it essential that the sale proceed at this time.

Honduras has long operated the region's most advanced jet fighters. In this context, the F-5E/F aircraft would add no new mission capability to the Honduran air force but simply preserve the regional balance. Nicaragua would, therefore, have no justification for obtaining jet fighters in response to the F-5 purchase. The sale is important to maintain good military-to-military relations with this democratic nation, to meet regional defense responsibilities, and to protect the balance of power in Central America.

Proposed sale of F-5 aircraft to Honduras

The proposed sale of 12 F-5E/F jet fighters by the United States to the Republic of Honduras to replace 13 aging Super Mystere fighters represents a significant contribution to regional stability. The sale would have positive implications both for the security of Honduras and continuing defense cooperation between the United States and that country. This proposed sale is not a simple response to a particular military threat. It is an attempt by the Gov-

ernments of Honduras and the United States to maintain a traditional military capability which is being lost because of the natural attrition of the obsolescent aircraft already in the Honduran inventory. The F-5E/F's would neither add a new mission capability to the regional military balance, nor expand the Honduran inventory because the Super Mystere supersonic fighter aircraft now in inventory will be gradually retired as the F-5's reach operational capability. To understand why the administration proposes this sale, one must first consider the political and military context within which the sale would take place.

Context: The political dimension

The Republic of Honduras has a civilian, democractically elected government. Voter participation in the November 1985 national elections was over 80 percent. The United States and Honduras have traditionally enjoyed close, cooperative relations. In fact, the Honduran electorate voted overwhelmingly (94 percent) in 1985 for presidential candidates who espoused pro-U.S. policies.

President Azcona and the Honduran armed forces share a strong commitment to Honduras' democratic and economic development and look to the United States to provide support and assistance. U.S. AID administers a program to strengthen Honduras' democratic institutions and the administration of justice. The U.S. economic assistance program also addresses development needs and complements elements of Azcona's comprehensive economic stabilization plan. In addition, the Peace Corps has some 340 volunteers in Honduras with programs primarily in health, education, and forestry. The ratio of U.S. economic assistance to U.S. military assistance has been roughly 3-to-1 in recent years.

The United States-Honduran security relationship dates back to the early part of this century. The basis for our current defensive arrangements is a 1954 Bilateral Military Assistance Agreement. Joint Presidential communiques issued in May 1985 (Reagan-Suazo) and May 1986 (Reagan-Azcona) reiterated U.S. commitments. The two countries have conducted joint training exercises periodically since 1965 and annually since 1983.

The Honduran political scene encompasses a wide range of political actors, including two major political parties—the ruling Liberals and the opposition Nationalists—two minor parties, the strongest labor movement in Central America, a free press and four daily newspapers, as well as a variety of peasant, business, and professional groups.

The Honduran military was instrumental in ensuring the return to democracy earlier in this decade and has since been highly supportive of civilian government. When a political crisis began to develop in mid-1985, the military worked together with the political parties and labor confederations to restore confidence in the electoral system and to guarantee the holding of elections in November 1985.

Honduras has a generally good human rights record. The Azcona government and current military leadership have endorsed publicly the importance of respecting human rights. Moreover, the government recently formed an interagency commission on human rights to support its policy.

Context: The military situation

Honduras has the smallest armed forces of any of its neighbors and a relatively large land mass to defend. (See appendix 2.) Portions of its territory, particularly along its borders, are only accessible by air. Traditionally Honduras has relied on air power to counterbalance numerically superior ground forces and deter aggression. It has built the strongest air force in Central America. Honduran air superiority has contributed to a regional balance in Central America. Additionally, Honduran air superiority provides deterrence. In this context, deterrence is the threat to use air power to strike back at an aggressor by attacking targets deep inside its territory.

The benefits of deterrence and regional balance are now threatened by the vastly increased manpower and ground equipment superiority of the Sandinista armed forces and the rapid obsolescence of the Super Mystere fighter aircraft—the backbone of the Honduran air force.

Since 1979 the Sandinista army alone has expanded from an 8,000 man force to 72,000 on active duty, thus outnumbering the Honduran army almost 5 to 1. Honduras does not wish to enter into a futile arms race with Nicaragua by trying to match or directly counter Sandinista superiority on the ground, but is determined to maintain its traditional qualitative edge in air power.

The Decision: The Super Mystere and alternatives

Because of their strategy to maintain a regional balance through air superiority, the Hondurans have equipped their air force with jet fighters for a number of years. They acquired their first jet fighter, the American-made F-86, in the early seventies. In 1976 Honduras began receiving 16 Super Mystere fighters from Israel, which had been manufactured in France in the mid-1950's. Because of attrition, only 13 of these aircraft are now in inventory. No other air force today flies the Super Mystere. Spare parts have not been manufactured for some time and are no longer available on the world market.

Honduras decided to request 12 F-5E/F aircraft from the United States after lengthy consideration of a number of options. Initially the United States suggested the F-5A to the Hondurans with the provision that that they could transition to the F-5E/F in the future. The Honduran Government rejected this proposal because the F5-A is an older aircraft and more difficult to maintain. An F-5A program would, moreover, cost approximately the same as the F-5E yet would require relatively early retirement—in 5 to 10 years, depending on the age of the individual aircraft.

After careful consideration of alternative aircraft—including the Israeli KFIR—Honduras selected the F-5E/F. The F-5E combines the capabilities on an interceptor and ground attack fighter and therefore can perform multiple missions. The F-5E/F is the most cost-effective and supportable system for the Honduran air force. Over 1,300 F-5E/F aircraft are now in inventories around the world. The aircraft is flown by three other Latin American countries: Mexico, Brazil, and Chile. Similar or more advanced aircraft are flown by Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, and,

of course, Cuba whose fighter/inceptor inventory approximately equals the total of all the Latin American countries. The F-5's we propose to sell Honduras have approximately 4,000 hours of flight time remaining or about 20 years of useful life. By the time all the F-5E/F's achieve full operational capability in Honduras, all of the Super Mystere aircraft will be out of service.

The F-5 program

The U.S. Government proposes to sell the government of Honduras a $75 million comprehensive F-5 aircraft package. This package would include 10 F-5E and 2 F-5F trainer aircraft, a 2-year supply of spare parts for airframes and engines, support equipment and special tools and spare parts for support equipment. The program would also contain contractor logistical and maintenance support, 30 AIM-9P3 air-to-air logistical and maintenance support, 30 AIM-9P3 air-to-air missiles and training for 14 pilots and 80 maintenance technicians.

The U.S. Air Force would release the planes from its own stocks, with an initial two aircraft schedule for delivery in December 1987 and final delivery slated for April 1989. To preserve combat readiness, the F-5's would gradually replace all Super Mystere aircraft now in Honduran inventories, with the first Mysteres to be retired as the F-5 program reaches initial operating capability (IOC) early in 1989. Annual financing from military assistance (MAP) funds would be as follows: fiscal year 1987 $25.0 million; fiscal year 1988 $22.6 million; fiscal year 1989 $18.9 million; and fiscal year 1990 $8.5 million.

Conclusion

The sale of F-5E/F's to Honduras is the most cost-effective way to maintain the regional military balance in Central America. The sale would introduce no new mission capability into the region, nor would it expand the Honduran armed forces because the 13 Super Mystere aircraft will be phased out of inventory as the F-5's reach operational capability. Since the F-5E/F would not add a new capability to the Honduran armed forces, the Sandinista government would be hard pressed to justify introducing MIG aircraft in response to the Mysteres' replacement. Failure to sell Honduras the F-5E's at this time would cause the existing regional military balance to erode over the next several years. If the military capabilities of the four Central American democracies are allowed to deteriorate, the Sandinistas will have little incentive to participate in negotiations to bring peace and stability to the region.

The United States has a tremendous stake in the security and democratic development of Central America. Over the last 10 years military regimes in Honduras and other Latin American countries have relinquished power, and are now supporting democratically elected civilian governments. Nevertheless, these recently established democracies remain fragile and require adequate security guarantees as their newly formed institutions take root. To governments such as Honduras, United States military and economic assistance offer the best hope for maintaining that security.

Both countries benefit from close military-to-military relations. Not least among the benefits is the ability of the U.S. Armed

Forces to share their long experience in good civil-military relations within a constitutional framework and respect for human rights. For its part, a strong, democratically elected Government of Honduras enhances the security of the United States. The sale of the F-5E/F's is more than a symbol of U.S. support, it is part of the very substance of regional defense cooperation and proof that the United States is meeting its responsibilities and acting in accord with its principles and interests.

THE SUPER MYSTERE

To compensate for its smaller ground forces, Honduras historically has relied on its air force to maintain the regional balance. As a result of this strategy, its air force has been equipped with jet fighter aircraft for a number of years.

The first jet fighter in their inventory was the American-made F-86.

In 1976 they acquired 16 Super Mystere (French) fighters from Israel.

—Current inventory: 13 aircraft.

—Pilots: 17 fully trained combat-ready pilots, 4 additional in training.

—Experienced technicians: 110.

Honduras is the only air force in the world still flying Super Mysteres.

The Super Mysteres are reaching the end of their useful life and will have to be replaced.

The Super Mysteres were manufactured in the mid-1950's by France and sold to Israel.

Before selling the Mysteres to the Hondurans, the Israelis replaced the French engine with a Pratt & Whitney model J-52. The J-52 is no longer manufactured and support is limited.

Spare parts for the Mystere have not been manufactured for some time and are no longer available on the world market.

Because the Super Mysteres had incurred significant corrosion damage, the USAF entered into an FMS program with the Honduran air force to apply corrective measures and update the avionics in eight of the aircraft.

The program was not designed to extend the life of the aircraft; it only made them safe to fly for the present.

THE F-5 PROGRAM

The F-5E is a twin engine, supersonic, light combat fighter aircraft that would continue the air superiority mission now served by the Super Mystere. In view of the Sandinistas' overwhelming superiority in ground forces and equipment, the Hondurans view continued air superiority as their best means of deterring Nicaraguan aggression.

The United States originally suggested the F-5A to the Hondurans with the provision that they could later transition to the F-5E. The Hondurans rejected the offer because the F-5A is an older aircraft and difficult to maintain. It also has a limited useful life—from 5 to 10 years, depending on the individual plane. The United States then helped the Hondurans identify alternative aircraft to

meet their requirements, including planes from the Israeli inventory since the Hondurans already have experience with Israel in this area. Because of low maintenance and operations costs and the availability of United States expertise, training, and logistical support—as well as the track record of the F–5E in other Latin American countries—the Government of Honduras chose the F–5E.

The U.S. proposes a package program including aircraft, training, support, and follow-on. Ten F–5E and two F–5F trainer aircraft would be phased into the Honduran air force over a 4-year period, with the first delivery occurring in December 1987. To preserve combat readiness, the Mysteres will be phased out gradually after the F–5 program attains initial operating capability (IOC) early in 1989. By the completion of the program in 1990, all Mysteres will have been retired. The U.S. Air Force would release the F–5's from its own inventory.

Program components

Program is for 10 F–5E and 2 F–5F trainer aircraft.

Two years of spare parts for the airframe and engine.

Support equipment, special tools, and spare parts for support equipment.

Contractor logistical and maintenance support.

30 AIM 9–P3 air-to-air missiles (rear engagement only, developed in the mid–1970's)

Training for 14 pilots and 80 maintenance technicians.

Estimated total cost: $75 million in military assistance (MAP).

$25 million in fiscal year 1987;
$22.6 million in fiscal year 1988;
$18.9 million in fiscal year 1989; and
$8.5 million in fiscal year 1990.

Estimated delivery schedule:

Two (2) aircraft in December 1987: one (1) F–5E and one (1) F–5F

Two (2) F–5E's in July 1988.

Four (4) F–5E's in December 1988.

Four (4) aircraft in April 1989: three (3) F–5E's and one (1) F–5F.

Estimated training schedule (to be conducted in the U.S.):

The initial pilots to be trained on the F–5 will begin training in June 1987. Training will run continuously until the last pilot completes training in June 1989.

The first maintenance technicians will begin training in July 1987. Training for the last maintenance students will be completed in December 1989.

Definition of initial operational capability (IOC) (expected in Jan/Feb 89):

Over half of aircraft (8) delivered.

Fifty percent of technicians and over half of pilots will have completed training.

Mixed contractor/indigenous maintenance capability.

Full dependence on contractor for supplies.

Initial delivery of air-to-air missiles.

Bottom line: 50 percent of personnel trained, with 67 percent of aircraft/equipment delivered. Personnel are new to the system and not yet combat-ready.

Definition of full operational capability (FOC) (anticipated in Dec 89/Jan 90):

All aircraft delivered.

Pilots trained and over 50 percent have approximately one year of experience in system.

Full indigenous maintenance capability and over 50 percent of personnel have 1 year of experience.

FMS logistics support structure for aircraft, support equipment, and munitions has been developed and is in place.

All air-to-air missiles delivered and personnel experienced in handling.

Bottom line: Aircraft, personnel, logistics structure in place though not all crews and technicians are experienced.

Appendix 1

COMPARATIVE AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE

Type	F-5E/F	Super Mystere	KFIR	MIG-21	MI-24/25 [4]
Maximum speed	1077 MPH (1.6 Mach)	743 MPH (1.125 Mach)	1550 MPH (2.35 Mach)	1385 MPH (2.1 Mach)	199 MPH
Maximum bombload [1]	6,000	2,200	8,500	2,200	2,000
Maximum combat radius—maximum bombload [2]	138m	130m	175m	200m	99m
Maximum combat radius [3]	650m	485m	475m	N/A	N/A

[1] All aircraft are capable of carrying a wide variety of bomds, rockets, and guns.
[2] Assuming maximum bombload, no external fuel.
[3] Aircraft armed with air-to-air missiles, guns/cannons, and external fuel tanks.
[4] The MI-24/25 helicopter in the Nicaraguan inventory is a "flying tank" and one of the most sophisticated attack helicopters in the world. Honduras has no comparable aircraft.

Appendix 2

CURRENT THREAT TO HONDURAS AND REGIONAL ORDER OF BATTLE

Since 1979, the Sandinista government of Nicaragua has engaged in a massive military buildup, far beyond its defensive needs. The Government of Honduras is deeply concerned about Nicaragua's radicalization and growing military power—often noting that when they came to power, the Sandinistas had no enemies in Central America.

During the last 7 years, Nicaragua has made numerous penetrations into Honduras. Sandinista forces made two significant cross-border attacks into Honduras in March and December 1986—presumably against anti-Sandinista guerrilla bases. The attacks inflicted casualties and damages to Honduran property. Both attacks prompted Honduras to seek United States assistance. In response to Sandinista incursions, since September 1985 the Honduran air force has twice attacked Nicaraguan forces.

Nicaragua, aided by Cuba and the USSR, has supported at least two attempts to foment insurgency in Honduras and continues to aid radical groups. The Government of Honduras is convinced that these activities will continue. Facing the subversive challenge, it would prefer to ensure that its conventional deterrence capabilities are maintained in a cost-effective manner so that it can better focus its remaining resources on dealing with this unconventional threat.

Honduras is concerned about the increasing threat from Nicaragua because its major deterrent capability, it air force, is deteriorating and likely to be inadequate to meet Sandinista challenges in the future.

The following tables display the regional order of battle.

ARMY STRENGTH—CENTRAL AMERICA

	Nicaragua	Honduras	El Salvador	Guatemala	Costa Rica [3]
Personnel:					
Active	[1] 72,000	14,600	43,000	30,000	(8,000)
Reserve [2]	22,000	0	0	10,000	0
Militia [2]	52,500	0	10,000	15,000	0
Tanks	150	0	0	15	0
Armor vehicles	200	100	88	50	0
Field artillery and multi rocket launchers:					
(100-mm+)	84	24	50	45	0
Air defense artillery	300+	30	24	12	0
SAMs (portable)	300+	0	0	0	0
Population (millions)	3.3	4.6	5.1	8.6	2.7

[1] Includes Ministry of Interior troops, mobilized reserves and mobilized militia.

[2] El Salvador and Honduras have no organized army reserves. El Salador's and Guatemala's "militias" are armed Civil Defense forces. All five countries have significant internal security forces, which are not included under Army personnel strengths.

[3] Costa Rica has no army. Its only security forces are 4,500 Civil Guard and 3,500 Rural Guard personnel.

Note: Updated: May 8, 1987.

AIR ORDER OF BATTLE—CENTRAL AMERICA

	Nicaragua	Honduras	El Salvador	Guatemala	Costa Rica
Personnel: Active	3,500	1,500	650	700	(1)
Aircraft:					
Ground attack	13	[2] 15	[2] 10	[2] 10	0
Fighter/trainer	[2] 3	[2] 13	[2] 8	0	0
Transport	[3] 22	20	14	20	0
Trainer/utility [4]	6	25	27	35	9
Helicopter	56	30	45	30	2
SAM's (SA-7)	300 +	0	0	0	0

[1] The Costa Rican Civil Guard has a small air element. There is no separate air section.
[2] Military jet aircraft.
[3] Includes civil aircraft that are often put to military use.
[4] Includes aircraft that have reconnaissance as their primary function.

Note: Updated May 8, 1987.

NAVAL ORDER OF BATTLE—CENTRAL AMERICA

	Nicaragua	Honduras	El Salvador	Guatemala	Costa Rica
Personnel: Active	850	650	650	900	(1)
Patrol boats	20	25	24	10	8
ASW minesweepers	6	0	0	0	0

[1] The Costa Rican Civil Guard has a small number of patrol boats assigned; there is no separate navy.

Note: Updated May 8, 1987.

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